

# AIR BUT WILL IT LAST FOREVER?



“When we love, we strive to become better than we are”  
PAULO COELHO  
NOVELIST

**FIRST KISS**  
What drives passion and love?

Highs and lows of keeping the first sparks of passion burning brightly

# Love for life

icating. If only we could bottle that feeling and take a sip when the relationship dips, as realistically it does.

As the saying goes, the course of true love rarely runs smooth.

The initial euphoria experienced is not sustainable.

Both parties will struggle to project their “best selves” as the excitement of sharing all the first experiences fade.

It may not quite be as harsh as familiarity breeding contempt – but certainly, what was once new transforms into normal and so the novelty wears off. The clock ticks, real life unfolds and a realistic version of each other is revealed.

At this “curiosity” stage, the rose tinted glasses are replaced with exposing some faults and flaws. It’s a time of exploring if there is enough compatibility and connection to

remain a “we” and weather potential storms that may arise.

The crisis phase of romantic love is when some sort of crisis presents, normally as a result of incompatibilities in expectations and needs.

Feathers get ruffled as disagreements and distance increases.

Although it’s disappointing, there’s an opportunity to deepen the connection if both are willing to work together and progress to the next stage.

If so, love enters what’s called “deep attachment stage” which occurs in the aftermath of the crisis.

Shadow selves have been seen, trials and tribulations transcended and you are closer as a consequence. You’ve decided the good outweighs the bad and you’re both worth it.

Then the relationship becomes one

of true commitment – you’ve experienced the highs and lows and you’re in for the long haul. Even though it’s not perfect, you are now committed and have made each other a priority.

But how can you protect and preserve love?

We can see from the stages above that relationships aren’t always plain sailing.

As a therapist, I discuss with my clients that falling in love is easy, maintaining it requires effort, engagement, accountability and respect.

The framework I have developed and apply to help couples get back on track is what I call the three Cs of Relationship Coaching.

The first C relates to identifying areas of compatibility and incompat-

ibility. What are the shared interests, values and similarities that deepen the connection and what drives disharmony? We explore needs and how to replace the “blame game” with taking personal accountability for improving the relationship.

The second C refers to applying effective communication skills.

We explore, not just the benefits, but the necessity of learning open communication.

I equip my clients with tools to express their needs in clear, open and respectful ways, to replace criticism with constructive feedback and to negotiate differences.

The third C denotes collaboration and compromise. There is a reason

wedding vows typically include “for better and worse”.

Relationships take work. We must have realistic expectations, practice kindness and be willing to forgive the wrongs if they aren’t deal breakers.

It’s also crucial to compromise and make the effort so freely given in the “honeymoon phase”.

Although keeping love alive requires a lot of investment, the payoff is worth it.

As writer Paulo Coelho said: “When we love, we always strive to become better than we are. When we become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too.”

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# Tell Laura I love her..

LOVELY Laura Anderson is worth a long, lingerie look as she gets in the mood for Valentine's Day by showing off her fab figure in pink undies.

The Love Island beauty was in romantic mood as she clutched a bunch of red roses while posing in the Boux Avenue smalls - much to the delight of her Insta fans.



HELLO PETAL  
Laura looks blooming lovely in lingerie



# ROMANCE IS IN



JUMPING FOR JOY Tom Cruise tells all to Oprah

By **MICHAELA BRADY**  
Counsellor and Psychotherapist

IT'S February, the most romantic month of the year as we celebrate Valentine's Day on the 14th.

What drives passion and love? Great thinkers through the ages have pondered the insatiable desire to throw all caution to the wind and dive straight in.

We see it in the celebrity world with legendary sight of Tom Cruise jumping on Oprah Winfrey's couch to tell the world how happy he was to be in love with Katie Holmes.

Pamela Anderson and Tommy Lee fell so madly and quickly in love they got married four days after they met.

Sadly, both of these great romances didn't last - but that's not to say plenty do endure.

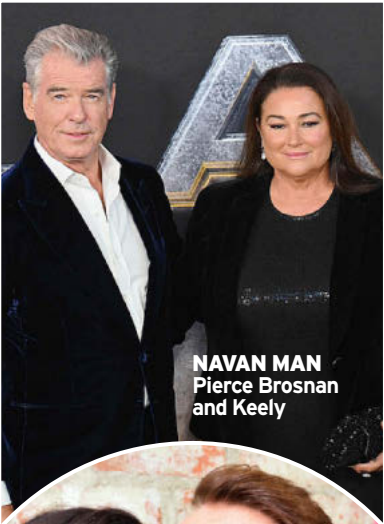


WHIRLWIND Tommy Lee and Pamela Anderson

Hollywood star - and Navan man - Pierce Brosnan and Keely Shaye-Smith are still madly in love after decades of marriage. So too are Bono and wife Ali Hewson.

So why is falling in love pretty easy, but preserving it a little less so?

How can it be that the initial euphoria of floating on cloud nine is destined to fade? Are there ways to navigate the highs and lows, keep the spark, or reignite it if it dims?



NAVAN MAN Pierce Brosnan and Keely

We do have some insights into the great mystery of it all.

First off, we have to look at what causes us to fall in love.

We might recognise it as the blissful infatuation, where the heart seems to overrule the head.

Ironically, it's a lot more to do with the head than you might think. When we connect - whether through common interests, shared values or physical attraction - the brain gets buzzed up and releases oxytocin, dopamine, serotonin and norepinephrine.

These are basically the "happy hormones" which increase energy and elation.

Not only will you feel as high as a kite, your sense of reason and logic is radically reduced.



ONE LOVE Bono and his wife Ali Hewson

**Energy**  
Happy hormones are released when in love

Your new mate seems perfect - hence the phrase: Love is blind.

Rock legends Depeche Mode nailed it when they sang I Just Can't Get Enough as did Robert Palmer with Addicted to Love. And who could blame them? Falling in love feels fabulous!

Some relationships happen fast and unravel just as quick, while others are slow burners, but built to last.

Whatever the pace, they tend to follow predictable patterns.

It's a bonus to be able to recognise these, so you can reduce the resistance

while travelling through them. The attraction stage is commonly known as "the honeymoon phase" and usually involves excessive day-dreaming, bursts of joy at phone beeps, while counting the sleeps till you meet.

It's tingles when hands touch and skipping through the streets grinning like Cheshire cats. It's magical and intoxicating.